

### DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND 1027 SUPERIOR AVENUE CLEVELAND. OHIO 44114 - 2560

719/1990



Solemnity of Christ the King November 25, 1990

Dear Friends.

I ampleased to share with you the publication Christ Calls Us Together, Parish Pastoral Council Policy for the Diocese of Cleveland. This publication is the result of a long period of study, prayer, reflection and consultation. Its purpose is to provide policy and suggestions for the continued development of Parish Pastoral Councils. This is a major revision of the diocesan guidelines first published in 1979 and reissued in 1984. It replaces these guidelines and all previous policy on Parish Councils. It builds upon the many experiences of our parishes, learnings from other Dioceses, and the 1983 Code of Canon Law. The title of this document reminds us of the Pastoral Letter written by Bishop Clarence Issenmann in 1972 when he called for the spiritual renewal of our diocesan community. The spirit of unity and spiritual growth which he described reflects the heart of Parish Pastoral Council life.

I am grateful to God for the quality of life and ministry within our parishes. Because of the generosity and creativity of those who worked together to develop Councils as leadership communities, Parish Councils exercise an important role in unifying and energizing our parishes. I appreciate the effort of our parishioners who openly offer their wisdom and insights in shaping plans and proposals for the future of their parish communities. I affirm our Pastors for regularly consulting with Council members in arriving at pastoral decisions.

I envision the Parish Council as a leadership community rooted in prayer, open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, committed to patient listening and study, and working to recommend the plans and directions that will enable the parish to respond most fully to what Jesus asks of us in these times. Each parish must take great care to form the relationships that enable this work to be done honestly and effectively.

The Norms in this policy become effective on November 25, 1990, the Solemnity of Christ the King. I ask that each parish study this document as the basis for the renewal of their Council and the development of local Council guidelines. Each parish is expected to initiate a process for Parish Council formation consistent with these Norms within one year of promulgation.

The Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office will offer inservice formation and education opportunities and additional resource materials to assist parish communities in Council formation.

At the foundation of Parish Council work is our recognition that **Christ Calls Us Together** to share His mission. When we pray and work with one another in a collaborative way through the ministry of the Parish Council, we can make this mission and ministry of Jesus come alive among us today. Let us look to the future with hope!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Anthony M. Pilla

Bishop of Cleveland

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Within our Diocese, we have great hope for the future ministry of Parish Pastoral Councils. Through prayerful collaboration, parish Staffs and parishioners already have experienced the rewards of sharing their giftedness in determining the vision and direction of our parishes. Now, in order to move toward a renewed understanding of Parish Pastoral Councils, it is helpful to explore the meaning of parish with respect to the mission of the Church.

Many Catholics experience the family and the parish as most important parts of the Church. Within the family, the Church of the home, the seed of faith is first planted and nourished and sustained. Within the parish, families and individuals continue the mission of Christ and publicly express their faith. The parish is defined in the **Code of Canon Law** as a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a diocese.

The parish does not exist for itself, but to carry forward the work of the Church which is the mission of Jesus. The parish has two basic purposes:

- to support the spiritual growth of its members through proclaiming the Word, building up the community, celebrating the liturgy, and serving all God's people; and
- to enable the members to participate actively in the priestly, prophetic and royal mission of Jesus to the world.

All Christians are called through Baptism and Confirmation to share responsibility for this mission and contribute according to their time, talent and treasure. But not everyone is called to fulfill this responsibility in the same manner or with the same role.

Some of the baptized are called to serve the community as ordained ministers. The pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a Pastor under the authority of the diocesan Bishop. The Pastor is commissioned to preach the Word of God, to guide the faithful and to unite the parish community through divine worship. The Pastor has the central leadership role in the life of the parish. He carries out this role with the cooperation of other priests or deacons and the assistance of lay members of the Christian faithful.

### **PARISH**

### **MISSION**

### **PASTOR**

This leadership role is marked by a spirit of collaboration and the recognition of the mutuality of gifts within the community. Pastoral leadership and authority cannot be separated from the servant role of building the community and empowering its members to reach their full stature and share the gifts they have been given.

The parish does not exist in isolation. Jesus Christ entrusted his mission to the twelve apostles and through them to the bishops of the Church, the successors of the apostles and the Holy Father, the successor of Peter. A parish derives its nature and function from the diocesan church under the leadership of the local Bishop. Each diocese and its parishes are a part of the universal Church and are guided by its tradition and teaching under the leadership of the Pope. The parish also exists within broader human communities on a local, national and global level.

The Church, and therefore the parish, are guided by the grace of Jesus Christ and the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Grace enables the members of the Church community to assume their roles and responsibilities and discern the directions for their lives as individuals, families and parish communities.

This publication, Christ Calls Us Together, builds upon the many experiences and learnings from our parishes since Bishop Clarence Issenmann's 1972 Pastoral Letter of the same name. In the 1978 Pastoral Letter, "To Build Up the Body of Christ," Bishop James Hickey encouraged every parish to have an established Parish Council by 1981. Subsequently, Bishop Hickey promulgated the initial Parish Council Guidelines for the Diocese of Cleveland in 1979 and Bishop Anthony Pilla reissued them in 1984.

Five years later, Bishop Pilla called together the Parish Council Guidelines Revision Committee to update the Guidelines in light of the revised Code of Canon Law. The Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office coordinated the Committee which included Pastors, Parish Council Chairpersons, a resource theologian, civil and Canon lawyers. After extensive consultation with existing Parish Councils, the major consultative groups of

LARGER CHURCH

**GUIDANCE** 

BACKGROUND FOR CHRIST CALLS US TOGETHER the diocese, and diocesan officials, as well as study of guidelines of many other dioceses, the Committee produced this publication. **Christ Calls Us Together** is now offered to the parishes of the Diocese of Cleveland as a resource for the continued development of Parish Pastoral Councils.

### ORGANIZATION OF CHRIST CALLS US TOGETHER

Norms:

The Code of Canon Law indicates that Parish Pastoral Councils are to be governed by Norms determined by the diocesan Bishop. Christ Calls Us Together contains ten Norms which all parishes are expected to meet. The Norms are basic laws governing Parish Pastoral Councils in the Diocese of Cleveland.

Commentary: A brief commentary explains the Norms and provides a basic context. Because of their close relationship, Norms 2, 3, and 4 are grouped together and followed by a unified commentary.

Suggestions for Implementation: Following the commentary, suggestions are offered for practical ways to implement the Norms. Each parish is to adapt these suggestions to its own situation. Norm 1 has a Schedule for Implementation in place of suggested actions.

Glossary: The Glossary entries clarify the meaning of key words and concepts used in Christ Calls Us Together.

**Appendix:** The Appendix includes supplementary materials for implementing the Norms. The items in the Appendix are arranged according to the Norms.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHRIST CALLS US TOGETHER represents the contributions of many people, some of whom are known to God alone. Numerous members of the diocesan community responded to surveys and preliminary drafts. Others acted as readers and consultants in specialized areas. Rosemary Amor edited several drafts of the publication. The Parish Council Guidelines Revision Committee included: James Connell, Chairperson, Rev. Allen Alexander, Rev. Martin Amos, Charles Feliciano, Thomas Fornadel, Rev. Richard Gonser, Sr. Maureen Grady, O.S.U., Sr. Carol A. Gross, O.P., Betty Holden, David M. Holly, Anthony Iezzi, Susan Krosel, John Kuwik, Timothy Lilley, John Mascolo, Rev. Thomas McCann, Rev. Thomas A. Moran, Daniel J. Newton, Rev. Robert F. Pfeiffer, Sally Riede, Rev. Mr. John Rivera, Martha Stalinski, Eleanor Swinerton, Sr. Patricia Rickard, S.N.D., Richard Krivanka and Rev. Mark Latcovich.

We are the people of God in the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, continuing the journey of faith begun in 1874 by pioneers who explored the wilderness and farmers who tilled the earth and immigrants, wave upon wave, who built the cities and worked in the factories.

We are women and men of faith and courage and love;
a people come from many lands and places - some long
ago, some recently;
a people who have suffered - and who still suffer from violence, - from poverty, - from discrimination;
a gifted people, a diverse people,
a people united through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Faith-filled, we have built churches to pray in and schools to hand on the faith to our children and hospitals and orphanages and settlement houses to care for those in need.

Enriched by our many cultures and voices and called through faith and Baptism, we proclaim God's living Word; we witness to God's presence in all of life; we celebrate God's love in worship and prayer.

Responding to the needs and challenges we now face: with faith

received from those who have gone before us nurtured in prayer and worship together; We pass this faith on to our children and to those who have not yet heard the Good news.

#### with love

binding us together and reaching out with compassion;

We serve our brothers and sisters in need.

### with hope

relying on the power of the risen Christ and the grace of God at work within us; We extend the reign of God in this time and place. The Vision Statement expresses who we are as a diocesan community and reflects the voices of thousands of people heard in listening processes held in 1988.



I am the Vine, you are the branches. Those who live in me and I in them will produce abundantly. (John 15:5a)



The image of the vine and branches portrays the intimate communion of Jesus with his disciples. The Second Vatican Council used this metaphor to describe the Church as a choice vineyard fruitfully cultivated by Christ (1). The image of the vine suggests a healthy and fruitful relationship that is sustained through mutual sharing and full-hearted giving .

Early Church teachings repeatedly referred to the image of the vine. According to Cyril of Jerusalem, by baptism the Christian becomes a "partaker of the holy vine. If you abide in the vine, you will grow as a fruitful branch" (2). Through Baptism, all Christians share in the priestly, prophetic and royal mission of Christ. All are called to carry on this mission in the Church and in the world (3).

Just as there are many branches to a vine, there are many, yet complementary roles of service which flow from one baptism in Christ. Some of the baptized are called to serve the community as ordained ministers who have the special responsibility to preach the Gospel, celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments and to lead the Christian faithful. The diocesan Bishop in his service of authority guides God's people in the building up of the Body of Christ (4). He entrusts the pastoral care of parishes to Pastors. Pastors carry out their role with the cooperation of other priests and deacons and the assistance of the laity.

The Bishop forms collaborative and consultative bodies of laity and clergy to assist Pastors in leading the Church on the local level (5). The Parish Pastoral Council is a principal form of collaborative leadership (6). This body enables clergy and laity to cooperate effectively in carrying out the mission of the Church (7).

The Norms for Parish Pastoral Councils are now presented to the parishes of the Diocese of Cleveland in order that all may be faithful to God's call and bear the "fruit that will endure." (John 15: 16)

- (1) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, nos. 6 and 21.
- (2) Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechesis I: "An Introductory Discourse to the Candidates of Baptism," The Works of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, vol. 1, Catholic University of America Press, 1969, p. 93.
- (3) Lumen Gentium, no. 31. Canon 204 of the Code of Canon Law reaffirms the call of all Christians "to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the Church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the condition proper to each one."
- (4) Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, Christus Dominus, nos. 17 and 27.
- (5) Canons 511 and 536 describe the role of the diocesan Bishop in fostering consultation and collaboration.
- (6) John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation on the Laity, Christifideles Laici, nos. 25, 27 and 30.
- (7) The term "laity" is understood in this document to mean all the faithful not in orders, including vowed women and men religious.

## Every parish of the Diocese of Cleveland is to have a Parish Pastoral Council.

### SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION



- Those parishes with Councils which have been operative during the years prior to the promulgation of these Norms are asked to begin integrating the Norms into Council processes by November 25, 1991. Integration of the new Norms refers to all facets of Council life, including orientation, nomination and selection of members and Officers.
- Those parishes with no Councils or inactive Councils are asked to select new members according to these Norms. Parishes are to begin this process by November 25, 1991.
- In all cases mentioned above, the Pastor is encouraged to begin the orientation of the parish community and Pastoral Council members (also referred to as Councilors) in a manner consistent with these Norms.
- Each parish will need to prepare and maintain its own local council guidelines in accordance with these Norms. Each parish is asked to send a copy of its Council guidelines to the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office.

The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body which makes recommendations to the Pastor.

The Pastor is to preside over the Parish Pastoral Council.

The Pastor is to consult the Parish Pastoral Council on matters of major pastoral concern.

The Pastor serves the parish community entrusted to him by the diocesan Bishop. The Pastor carries out this role through teaching, sanctifying and governing with the cooperation of others who share in the pastoral care of the parish and the assistance of the Christian faithful (Canon 519). The role of the Pastor cannot be surrendered or diminished. This authority is not to be viewed as personal power but as genuine service to the Christian faithful exercised in a collegial manner.

In virtue of his office, the Pastor presides over the Parish Pastoral Council. As Presider, the Pastor fully participates in the deliberations of the Parish Pastoral Council and is involved completely in the planning and policy development. The Pastor is responsible for the final approval of Council recommendations concerning pastoral plans and policies as well as for the implementation by parish Staff and other groups.

The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body which unites laity and clergy in a community of prayer, leadership, service and pastoral planning. All Councilors work together as they seek to listen to the Holy Spirit in discerning what is best for the parish in the light of the Gospel, the Church's teaching, and the experiences and needs of parishioners and the surrounding community. The Council can fulfill its role by encouraging a climate in which people can feel free to speak the truth with openness and love.





The Pastor consults the Pastoral Council on major pastoral concerns which affect the life and mission of the parish: namely, to proclaim the Word, to build up the community, to celebrate liturgy, and to serve all God's people. The Council strives to achieve consensual agreement upon recommendations which affect future directions for spiritual growth and pastoral activity.

As a consultative body, the recommendations of the Parish Pastoral Council bear considerable weight. The Council is not a body which makes binding decisions nor is it an advisory group which gives advice that can be readily ignored. When a Council regularly seeks to arrive at a consensus, rarely would a Pastor not accept a Council recommendation. While the Pastor is not obliged to follow the recommendations of a Parish Pastoral Council, it is understood that he would do so unless there is an extraordinary reason to do otherwise. When this is the case, he makes known the basis for his decision to those concerned (unless confidentiality prevents this).

The Council's recommendations deal with pastoral plans and policies and not with acts of administration. This is an important distinction. A pastoral policy or plan

- sets a basic direction and selects the best strategies to promote this direction;
- provides a guide for future actions, particularly in areas that have a broad impact on parish life;
- provides clear direction while allowing room for creative, flexible action by those who will implement the policies.

Matters of administration are distinct from pastoral policies and plans. Acts of administration concern the daily operation of the parish which includes the implementation of pastoral plans and policies, parish programming, budgeting, and personnel matters. Decisions relating to acts of administration are the responsibility of the Pastor or the Staff, committee or other persons designated by the Pastor. These decisions include the development and application of administrative policies, plans, structures and procedures, all of which are distinct from the pastoral issues addressed by the Parish Pastoral Council.

Each parish Staff member is responsible for collaborating with the Pastor in implementing the policies of the parish, the diocese and the universal Church. In some parishes, there is a formal Pastoral Team which may make administrative and pastoral decisions collegially while recognizing the role of the priest moderator. A Pastoral Team also implements pastoral plans and policies. In other parishes, the Bishop has appointed a Pastoral Administrator to work with a nonresident Pastor. A Pastor to whom has been entrusted the pastoral care of another parish may delegate the Pastoral Administrator appointed by the Bishop to preside at the Parish Pastoral Council.

The Pastoral Staff/Team and the Councilors need to be in regular communication with each other, especially at the Commission level. The Pastoral Council regularly requests background from the Pastoral Staff/Team regarding pastoral plans and policies under consideration. The Pastoral Staff/Team likewise requests from Council information on major questions related to the implementation of pastoral plans and programs. The Pastoral Staff/Team also offers progress reports on the implementation of Council recommendations. However, it is necessary that the pastoral planning and policy recommendation processes of the Council and the administrative decisions and implementation of programs by the Pastoral Staff/Team be seen as distinct functions of each group and respected as such. In this way, a climate of trust, support, creative cooperation, and collaboration can become a reality.

- While the Pastor presides over the Parish Pastoral Council, the Council selects a Chairperson from among the members to conduct the meetings.
- The Pastor and Council Officers provide an orientation for Candidates and new Councilors on the meaning and practice of collaboration, consultation, consensus and other related concepts.
- A newly-appointed Pastor and an existing Council ideally work together for six months before making major changes to the Council.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to promote the spiritual growth of the parish community and to plan ways for the parish to carry out the mission of the Church.



The parish is called to support the spiritual growth of its members and enable full participation of the laity in the mission of the Church in the world. The pastoral planning work of the Parish Pastoral Council focuses upon how the ministries and activities of the parish foster the spiritual development of the parish and enable its outward mission to the world.

The Parish Pastoral Council promotes the spiritual growth of the parish and plans ways for the parish to carry out the Church's mission through the following four interdependent functions:

### 1. Spiritual formation

The primary concern of the Parish Pastoral Council is the spiritual growth of the parish community. In order to contribute to this ongoing spiritual renewal, Councilors need to commit themselves to regular times of prayer and study centered on Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church. They should strive to build a Christian community with mutual trust and understanding among members. Ideally they form a group which serves as a model of prayer, cooperation, celebration and service.

### 2. Pastoral planning

The Council is the pastoral planning body of the parish. It ensures ongoing collaboration in developing and renewing a pastoral plan for the ministries and life of the parish. This pastoral plan must promote the full mission of the Church: the priestly, prophetic, and royal mission of Jesus. While other groups may focus on a specific area of mission and ministry, the Parish Pastoral Council is responsible for determining how the parish can be most effective in fulfilling its total mission. The Council discerns what needs to be supported, changed, or developed to make the parish more faithful to the call of God.

To fulfill its pastoral planning responsibility, the Council annually

- listens to and evaluates the overall experience and quality of life of the parish community; and
- develops (or updates) and then recommends parish pastoral plans and priorities for the future.

These two steps may encompass various levels of work and complexity, depending upon the size of the parish and its previous planning efforts. For example, this planning work may include the following:

- developing or reviewing the parish mission statement;
- listening to the parishioners (by means of meetings, surveys, interviews, visitations);
- identifying key needs and concerns;
- synthesizing parish goals and priorities into an ongoing pastoral plan;
- recommending flexible strategies and supporting followup related to the parish goals and priorities;
- evaluating progress in achieving the parish pastoral plan and related goals.

Parish planning addresses the needs and goals of the parish community in the context of Church teaching and the mission of the larger Church. Diocesan plans and policies and the "Our Vision and Goals" statement provide a frame of reference for use in developing parish goals. The Council also can use a "Family Perspective" to examine the manner in which parish plans and activities will affect family life.

In addition to conducting the annual cycle of pastoral planning, the Parish Pastoral Council also serves as a planning review body. It provides consultation to the Pastor regarding proposed goals, pastoral policies or programs as developed by the Staff or other groups, especially those that may involve significant change

in or impact upon the life of the parish community. This consultation process is to include an evaluation of such proposals in light of their relationship with any existing pastoral plan, parish goals or the plans of other parish groups.

In fulfilling its planning responsibilities, the Council may find that the ongoing coordination of various activities and related communications can be accomplished through the Pastoral Staff or some network of organizational leaders. For example, some parishes have found it helpful to have a separate committee of leaders who meet to develop and update a parish calendar of events.

### 3. Pastoral Policy Development

The Parish Pastoral Council develops, reviews and recommends pastoral policies. The Pastor is responsible to ensure that major pastoral policy proposals developed by the Staff, other individuals or groups are brought before the Parish Pastoral Council for their review and recommendation. (See the commentary for Norms 2, 3, 4 for further clarification of the Pastoral Council's role in policy development.)

### 4. Communication

The Council is responsible to communicate regularly with members of the parish community. The Council also enables them

- to relate their experiences, needs and hopes to the planning process of the parish.
- to recognize their gifts and talents, and to share in the ongoing pastoral work of the parish.

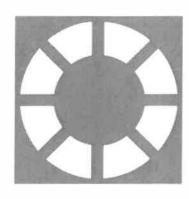
The Parish Pastoral Council also communicates with the diocesan community and universal Church through deanery and Regional gatherings, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, and the Bishop and his administration. Because the mission of the parish extends to all people living within its area, the Parish Pastoral Council supports and encourages communications with other faith communities and the local civic community.

### SUGGESTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- The Parish Pastoral Council develops a specific plan to
  - include prayer, study and formation at each meeting, and
  - conduct an annual pastoral planning process.

# The members of the Parish Pastoral Council represent the interests and pastoral needs of the parish community.

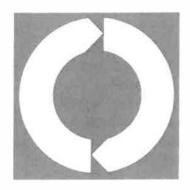
As a consultative body, the Parish Pastoral Council strives to represent the pastoral needs of the whole parish community. A truly representative group affords divergent insights and experiences, and thus allows for fullness and completeness in reflection, analysis, and sharing. Representation is partly a matter of structure and partly a matter of attitude. From the perspective of structure, the Council should include a broad cross-section of the parish community and, at the same time, give evidence of a balance. From the perspective of attitude, members of the Parish Pastoral Council are to consider the good of the entire parish rather than a single point of view. Membership on the Pastoral Council is open to registered Catholic members of the parish who are in full communion with the Church.



- Each parish needs to identify the nature of its population in order to determine the basis for representation.
- Each parish also needs to determine ways in which its Council structure provides for representation of the whole parish community.
- Qualities for potential members include:
  - willingness to participate in an orientation process;
  - willingness to listen and be open-minded towards the ideas of others and the good of the whole parish;
  - dedication to the mission and spiritual welfare of the parish;
  - commitment and ability to give time to attend meetings and to prepare sufficiently;
  - willingness to work with the Pastor who is the spiritual leader of the parish; and
  - commitment to work in a group process of prayer, consensus-building and planning.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Membership on the Parish Pastoral Council, except for those who are members by reason of their office, is to be determined in an appropriate manner which allows for the participation of the parish community.



The process used to nominate and select Candidates for membership to the Parish Pastoral Council is very important. Though the process may vary due to the size and needs of the parish, each Council provides opportunities for parishioners to participate in some manner. The process may consist of a combination of appropriate methods such as open nominations discernment, election, and appointment. For example, participation by parishioners may occur at the beginning of the process when nominations occur or at the end of the process when Councilors are selected. Throughout the process, it is necessary for the Council and the Candidates to discern those who have the gifts needed to serve on the Council.

At least two-thirds of the Councilors are chosen from members of the parish community who are not Staff members. Appointments by the Pastor and/or the the Council may comprise no more than one-third of the membership of the Parish Pastoral Council.

Those who share in the pastoral care of the parish by virtue of their office are members of the Pastoral Council (Canon 536). The Pastor is clearly a member of the Council. If a Parochial Vicar shares in the pastoral care of the parish, by reason of his office he is a member of the Council. Similarly, if a Deacon or Pastoral Associate shares in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of an ecclesiastical office, that person is a member of the Council. Other members of the parish Staff may be selected or appointed members of the Parish Pastoral Council in accordance with the local Parish Pastoral Council guidelines.

- Since parishes differ greatly in composition, each parish determines the size of its own Council. For example, a Council may include as few as eight members and as many as twenty-five.
- Each Council provides a regular orientation process for Candidates, new Councilors, and Commission members.
   Regular orientation is essential for the continued development of the Council.
- Each parish states explicitly in its guidelines how the Council members are selected: when, how, and by whom. Generally, the Council Chairperson, in consultation with the Pastor and the other Councilors appoints an ad hoc Selection Committee to plan, conduct and oversee the process of selection of Councilors.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Members of the Parish Pastoral Council, except for those who are members by reason of their office, shall have a limited term.



SUGGESTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of a limited term is to generate fresh ideas, prevent stagnation and burnout, create leadership opportunities for others, and encourage volunteers to emerge who might otherwise decline lengthy commitment. A limited term of membership is usually no less than one year and no more than four years.

 Each parish establishes an appropriate system of rotation in order to call forth new Councilors. In some parishes, rotation of two- or three-year terms of membership may be helpful. In other parishes, it may be helpful to select a totally new Council every two to four years.

# The Parish Pastoral Council is to select a Chairperson and other Officers from among its members.

Pastoral leadership is to be marked by a spirit of collaboration and by the recognition of the diversity of gifts within the community. Themembers of the Pastoral Council form with the Pastor a leadership community of service to the larger parish. Council leaders are needed to plan and guide the work of the Council so that the gifts of its members can be used wisely. One member of this leadership community is called forth to serve as Chairperson.

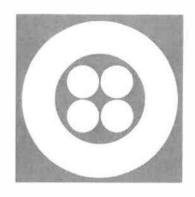
The selection of the Chairperson and Officers is to be done in a spirit of prayer, so as to discern the persons with the gifts needed for these roles. One model for Officers follows. Other models of collaborative leadership such as co-Chairpersons or rotating Chairpersons also may be used.

The Chairperson chairs the meetings, assists in developing the agenda, and provides the means to prepare for Council meetings and to follow them up. As a leader, the Chairperson helps develop unity and stability by promoting an atmosphere of trust and open communication.

The Vice-chairperson chairs meetings in the Chairperson's absence and attends to other designated responsibilities.

The Secretary is responsible for the general secretarial duties of the Council. These duties include making communications and keeping records of the activities of the Parish Pastoral Council. In order to allow the Secretary to participate fully in the Council meetings, the Minutes may be recorded by someone other than a Council member.

The term of office for Officers of the Pastoral Council may be either one or two years. A one-year renewable term seems to be the most common procedure. Each Council considers the possible advantages and disadvantages of the one- or two-year terms and decides what is most appropriate for its situation.



Chairperson

Vice-Chairperson

Secretary

### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- The selection of Officers takes place during a Council meeting. All Councilors are informed of the selection of Officers and encouraged to attend and participate in the discernment.
- Each Pastoral Council ideally forms an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of the Pastor and the Council Officers. This Committee prepares the Council agenda, plans the meeting and preparation processes to accomplish this agenda, and carries on Council business between the Council sessions.
- At the transfer, resignation, incapacity, removal, or death of the Pastor, the Pastoral Council continues to serve the parish community until a new Pastor is appointed by the Bishop. The Parish Pastoral Council acts as a consultative body to the Parochial Administrator when the pastorate is vacant. However, no policy changes may be made until after the new Pastor reconvenes the Council.

The Parish Pastoral Council works with existing parish groups and forms new groups as needed to promote the spiritual growth of the parish and foster the mission of the Church.

The Parish Pastoral Council works with existing groups and forms the structures needed to assist it in fulfilling its purpose. The effectiveness of the Council depends greatly upon the vitality and viability of its collaborative relationships and supporting structures. The Council in consultation with the Pastor may delegate certain responsibilities to Commissions and committees. In other cases, the Council may coordinate its work with other existing parish organizations or groups.

The word "Commission" is used to denote a group which assists the Council by developing pastoral plans and policies in a specific area of parish life and then recommending these policies to the Parish Pastoral Council. In order to have direct communication between the Council and Commissions, a liaison person needs to be designated for each Commission.

The word "committee" is used to denote a group which collaborates with the Staff in implementing plans and policies. Standing committees deal with on-going areas of responsibility. *Ad hoc* committees have a specific task and a limited duration of existence.

For example, the Spiritual Development Commission may identify the need for a process of spiritual enrichment. Members may then study various programs, consult with pastoral Staff members, talk to outside experts, and compare the goals of the programs with those of the Pastoral Council and of the Commission. After a thorough study, they recommend to the Pastoral Council a particular program as most consistent with all of the above. The Council reflects upon the recommendation of the Commission and discerns an appropriate plan of action. Following the discernment, the Council may then recommend the program to the Pastor. The Pastor decides if and how the program is

implemented. A Staff person might then be delegated to initiate the program. The program might be implemented by establishing a special committee or ministry team to be responsible for it. (If the Commission itself chooses to take responsibility for the program, then the Commission members are taking on a committee function.) The Spiritual Development Commission later may evaluate the program and make further recommendations.

In actual practice, due to parish size and other considerations, some Pastoral Council Commissions/committees do combine planning, policy development, and the implementation functions within the same group. However, it is very important, for reasons of accountability and procedure, that the group be clear when it is functioning as a planning/policy development group and when it is engaged in implementation.

Because the Parish Finance Council has a distinct relationship to the Parish Pastoral Council, cooperation is essential for the good of the entire parish. (Refer to the section on "The Relationship of the Parish Pastoral Council and the Finance Council" which follows.) Each Council is to designate in its respective guidelines the ways that this cooperative relationship can be promoted.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Parish Pastoral Council determines which Commissions are needed in the parish. Research indicates that Councils have formed Commissions/committees such as Education, Evangelization, Family Life, Hospitality, Human Care, Liturgy, Membership, Parish Life, Pro-Life, Property Maintenance, Social Concerns, Social/Recreation, Spiritual Development, Vocations, Youth, and others. These titles represent important pastoral concerns which in certain parish communities are addressed by one or more Commissions/committees of the Pastoral Council. Commissions may use the five goal areas in the Diocesan "Our Vision and Goals" Statement to guide them in forming Commissions to address parish needs.

- Each Commission needs to determine the number of persons necessary to address effectively its area of responsibility. The work of some Commissions may require several committees. For example, the Education Commission may have committees such as preschool, parish day school, parish school of religion, adult education. Usually, a Commission numbers not less than five nor more than fifteen persons. Six to nine members is considered ideal.
- The membership of each Commission is, as far as possible, broadly representative of the entire parish community. Each Commission needs to select a Chairperson to be responsible for the organization, coordination and promotion of the Commission's work. The Commission also needs a liaison person to the Pastoral Council who ideally, but not necessarily, is the Chairperson of the Commission. The official representative of the Commission to the Parish Pastoral Council has a voice at Council meetings.
- The Parish Pastoral Council strives to foster collaboration between and among the various Commissions. At times, two or more Commissions may need to work together to address a specific issue. Some Councils annually call together all Commission members for spiritual formation and planning.
- In some parishes, particularly very small ones, the Pastoral Council may choose to use a committee structure rather than have Commissions. In this case, the Council takes responsibility for all the planning and evaluation functions of individual Commissions in each area of parish life. Council may recommend to the Pastor the formation of standing committees for implementing the decisions of the Council in respective areas of concern. Since the Pastoral Council functions as a consultative body for spiritual formation, pastoral planning, policy development, and communication, the Council should not be involved in the implementation of its own recommendations.

The Parish Pastoral and the Parish Finance Council are distinct in function. However, they are related, since both are concerned with the life and mission of the parish. Each parish community is to foster a cooperative relationship between the Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Council. The following distinctions may aid in developing this relationship:

#### EXISTENCE

- Canon 536 enables the diocesan Bishop to establish Pastoral Councils.
- Canon 537 mandates the existence of a Finance Council in every parish.

### NATURE **AUTHORITY**

Both Parish Pastoral Councils and Finance Councils are consultative to the Pastor; the Pastoral Council in matters of major pastoral concern, the Finance Council in matters of financial concern.

Canon 537 of the Code of Canon Law prescribes that the Parish Finance Council be distinct from the Parish Pastoral Council because each has responsibility for distinct aspects of parish life and the membership of each is different.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to promote the spiritual growth of the parish community and to plan ways for the parish to carry out the mission of the Church. The Parish Pastoral Council represents the interests and pastoral needs of the entire parish.
- The purpose of the Finance Council is to aid the Pastor in the administration of parish goods in order to carry out the mission of the parish. The Parish Finance Council is to include persons with skills in finance, administration and law.

### RELATIONSHIP

Despite these distinctions, the two Councils are related in their mutual concern for the life and mission of the parish.

- The Finance Council looks to the Parish Pastoral Council for a statement of the mission of the parish, a pastoral plan and parish priorities.
- The Parish Pastoral Council looks to the Finance Council for sound financial guidance and planning regarding the resources needed to develop and implement parish plans, programs and policies.

### **PURPOSE**

The cooperation between the Councils may be realized in some of the ways which follow. Regular reports can be exchanged between the two Councils. The Parish Finance Council may choose one of its members to be a liaison to the Pastoral Council. A joint meeting of representatives from both Councils may discuss a particular issue of common concern. Both Councils can foster cooperative relationships through regular communication. Each parish is to determine how this relationship is best lived out in its local situation and specify ways to foster cooperation in its local Council guidelines.

### **COOPERATION**

The relationship of the two Councils may be illustrated as follows:

EXISTENCE	PASTORAL COUNCIL Recommended by Canon Law if judged opportune by bishop (Canon 536)	FINANCE COUNCIL Mandated by Canon Law (Canon 537)
NATURE	Consultative to Pastor	Consultative to Pastor
AUTHORITY	Matters of major pastoral concern	Matters of major financial concern
PURPOSE	Promote spiritual growth of parish community and plan ways for parish to carry out the mission of the Church	Aid pastor in the administration of parish goods
IMPLEMENTATION	Pastor, staff and community	Pastor, staff and community
RESPONSIBILITY	Pastoral evaluation and planning	Financial evaluation and planning
MEMBERSHIP	Grounding in Vatican II Unity in diversity: broad parish representation	Grounding in Vatican II Skills in finance, administration and law
FORMATION OF MEMBERS	Carry out role of servant leadership in pastoral planning	Carry out role of servant leadership in financial planning

- Administrative decisions Those decisions concerned with the day to day operation of the parish or a particular program or ministry within the parish. These decisions are the responsibility of the Pastor or the person designated by him to a particular area.
- **Accountability** Holding a person, committee or organization responsible for achieving or fulfilling tasks within a given job description.
- Code of Canon Law Law enacted and promulgated by the Pope for the orderly pastoral administration and government of the Church. The revised Code, effective November 27, 1983, consists of 752 canons in seven books.
- Collaboration The process of working together as a joint effort. In the Church, the belief that every baptized person is gifted and called to ministry is the basis for collaboration. According to Sofield and Juliano (Collaborative Ministry, Ave Maria Press, 1987, p.11), collaboration is the identification, release and union of the gifts of all baptized persons.
- **Collegial** Quality of authority or power shared equally among colleagues; union apparent in the mutual relations among members of a group as they assume responsibility for the common good.
- **Commission** A group which develops policy in a particular area of need and concern, then recommends this policy for approval to the Parish Pastoral Council and those who will implement it.
- **Committee** A group of persons chosen to consider, investigate, report or implement policy decisions which have been approved.
  - Ad hoc Committee A committee established for a specific purpose or a special activity which usually disbands when purpose is accomplished.
  - Standing Committee A committee which remains in place for an extended period of time.
- Consensus The process of arriving at a decision through open discussion and resolution of major discrepancies. Without compromising any strong conviction or needs, consensus results in a decision that all members of the group can accept and uphold.
- Consultation A process of shared decision-making. Canon 127 establishes the seriousness of the consultative process. According to this Canon, if church law requires consultation, then the group to be consulted must be legitimately convoked. At least a majority of the members must be consulted. If consultation is required with certain persons or individuals, the Pastor is required to listen to such persons and ordinarily not act contrary to their advice, especially if consensus is achieved.
- Consultative Body The Parish Pastoral Council as a consultative body is to be a broadly representative group of the entire parish faith community. As such, it seeks to arrive at a consensual agreement on significant issues in order to develop policy recommendations for the spiritual growth and pastoral activity of the parish. The recommendations of the Parish Pastoral Council are to deal with general pastoral policies and not with administrative detail.
- Councilor A member of the Council.
- Deanery A geographic grouping of parishes designed to facilitate communication. Deanery meetings enable the parish priests and representatives to voice the needs and concerns of the people throughout the diocese. The 243 parishes and seven missions in the Cleveland Diocese are grouped into thirteen deaneries.

- Deanery Forums Meetings which include the Dean, lay deanery representatives to the Diocesan Pastoral Council, lay representatives from parishes within the deanery, representatives of vowed religious, deacons and priests. Participants in the Deanery Forums obtain input regarding issues and concerns which are to be addressed by the DPC; discuss items of concern to the parishes in the deanery and the work and actions of the DPC as it relates to the deanery; and work together to develop channels of interparish communication.
- Diocesan Pastoral Council One of the major consultative groups of the Diocese of Cleveland. The Bishop is the president of this body which also includes laity elected from the deaneries, priests selected by the Presbyteral Council, and sisters selected by the Council of Religious Leadership of Cleveland. Also holding membership are representatives of youth and minority groups of the diocese. The DPC meets monthly with the bishop to consider major pastoral policies and concerns of the diocese. (A media presentation on the DPC is available at the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office.)
- **Discernment** The process of arriving at a decision in accord with God's will through prayerful reflection and deliberation. Communal discernment is related to consensus but adds the following dimensions to the consensus process: prayerful reflection, gathering of evidence, discussion of positive and negative factors of proposed alternative plans of action and confirmation by the group.
- Ecclesiastical Office Any function constituted in a stable manner by divine or ecclesiastical law to be exercised for a spiritual purpose (Canon 145).
- **Evaluation** The conclusion which results from a process of measuring and judging progress according to accepted standards.
- **Function** The normal or characteristic action of anything. The four functions of a Pastoral Council are: (1) Spiritual Formation, (2) Pastoral Planning, (3) Policy Development, and (4) Communication.
- Goal Statement of a desired end which reflects the overall purpose and is related to a major area of concern.

  Goals need to be written in specific and challenging terms so that they are recognizable when achieved.
- Guideline A statement of procedure which clarifies how the Norms are to be applied and observed.
- Mission/Vision Statement A concise statement of the group's purpose and reason for existence. It helps the group to identify itself and set goals. It responds to the questions: "Who are we?" "What do we value?" and "What do we seek to become as a parish community?"
- Norm An individual rule of action; a standard of conduct that must or should be followed. Norms help to implement policy and make policy real.
- Objective A sub-goal to be accomplished in one year or less. It has the same criteria as a goal.
- Objective Statement A specific, time-oriented and realistic statement of what is to be done, for whom, when and how, and at what cost.
- Parish A community of the faithful to be served by a Pastor charged with responsibility for providing them with full pastoral services. Most parishes are territorial, embracing all of the faithful in a certain area of the diocese. Some are personal or national for certain groups of people without strict regard to their places of residence.

- Parish Finance Council A Council which aids the Pastor in the administration of parish goods. The Finance Council is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop. Members of the Council are selected according to Norms established by the diocese. The Council possesses consultative vote. The Finance Council looks to the Pastoral Council for a statement of the mission of the parish, a pastoral plan and parish priorities.
- Parish Pastoral Council A Council which assists the Pastor in discerning how the parish can best carry out the mission of the Church. The Pastoral Council is regulated by universal law as well as by Norms issued by the diocesan bishop. The Council possesses consultative vote. The Pastoral Council looks to the Finance Council for sound financial guidance and planning regarding the resources needed to implement parish plans, programs and policies.
- Participative Sharing in, taking part in. Participative decision-making means the leader is in open dialogue during the various consultations so that there is a mutual shaping of each others' thinking in the process.
- Participative Leadership Capacity to influence the behavior of others in a given situation toward a certain goal or objective in such a way that they take ownership for both the process and its outcome and are enabled to grow and develop independently of the leader.
- **Pastor** An ordained priest charged with the pastoral care of people committed to his care. This care includes the following areas: worship, education, pastoral service, and administration.
- Pastoral Administrator A lay person, religious or permanent deacon who is entrusted with the ongoing pastoral care of a parish in the absence of a resident Pastor. This care includes the following areas: worship, education, pastoral service and administration. The Pastoral Administrator is appointed by the Bishop. Other related terms follow, based on Canons 391 and 517.
  - **Canonical Pastor** A priest appointed by the Bishop who is given the faculties of a Pastor to supervise the Pastoral Administrator in a parish without a resident Pastor.
  - Parish Manager One who is appointed by the Bishop to administer a parish that is scheduled to close or to merge.
  - **Sacramental Minister** A priest appointed by the Bishop who is responsible for the celebration of the sacraments in a parish where there is no priest in residence.
  - Pastoral Minister A pastoral minister is a member of the Catholic Community who officially requests and accepts the call of the Bishop to share in the mission of the Church. He or she may be a non-ordained lay person or vowed religious. Through formal training and certification, the pastoral minister is commissioned to fulfill certain parish or diocesan roles. This is accomplished in collaboration with those who are ordained.
- Pastoral Planning Pastoral Planning is a prayerful and participative process by which parishioners define themselves as a community, identify their common purpose, vision, goals and priorities, and then devise ways to accomplish their pastoral plan. It answers the questions: "What are we going to do?" and "How are we going to do it?"
- Pastoral Staff The group responsible for collaborating with the Pastor in the pastoral care of the parish and in implementing the policies of the parish. Usually consists of one or more associate Pastors, deacons, men and women religious and lay pastoral ministers. This term typically refers to paid staff, but may also refer to volunteers when appropriate.

- Pastoral Team A group which can be composed of priests, deacons, men and women religious and lay pastoral ministers who make administrative and pastoral decisions collegially and hold themselves responsible and accountable for the implementation of these decisions.
- **Planning** A process of assessing needs, establishing goals and objectives and determining the means and resources to achieve a desired outcome.
- **Policy** A guide for future actions in a particular area of parish life. Policy deals with broad commitments to goals for the parish community along with objectives and strategies to reach these goals.
- **Preside** The Pastor presides over the Parish Pastoral Council by virtue of office. A Chairperson conducts the meetings and the Pastor fully participates in the deliberations, planning and policy development. The Pastor is responsible for the final approval of Council recommendations as well as the implementation.
- **Priority** A specific pastoral need or goal given a preferential ranking. Groups usually do not have enough resources to respond to all needs or carry out all goals; therefore, they have to decide which needs and goals are highest preferences at a given time.
- Purpose The object for which something exists or is done; the end in view. The purpose of a Parish Pastoral Council is to promote the spiritual growth of the parish community and to plan ways for the parish to carry out the mission of the Church.
- Representation Refers to the manner in which members of the parish are somehow involved in the Pastoral Council. Members may be discerned, elected, or appointed.
- **Resolution** A written document brought to the Parish Pastoral Council stating a policy developed through a planning process. Includes a statement, resolution, approval, review process and frequency. See example in the Appendix.
- Second Vatican Council The 1962-1965 assembly in Rome of Bishops of the world called together by Pope John XXIII and referred to as an ecumenical council. Approximately 2,500 bishops were in attendance at this major event in the Church's history in this century which set the Church on a course of renewal affecting the Church around the world.
- Shared Responsibility The theological principle which says that each member of the Church, by reason of Baptism, has the right and duty to participate in the Church's mission among all people. Shared responsibility is based on the communion that is the nature of the Church and the mission which Christ entrusted to that Church. Communion is not the work of one, but the bonding together of all. The Church's mission is not entrusted only to a few, but is the responsibility of all the People of God. Shared responsibility means that God's truth, which provides the guidance for the Church, comes not only through the leaders but also through the people. In order for the Church to have the fullness of God's light and guidance, the people must be consulted. In our time, the Parish Pastoral Council is one of the primary structures in the Church for making shared responsibility a practical reality.
- Subsidiarity A principle of authority whereby decisions are entrusted to the appropriate body and not assumed by a higher authority. Issues are dealt with and policies are established at the lowest proper level of responsibility and competency. A judgment which can be made at the subcommittee level should not be made by the Commission/committee to which the subcommittee is related; a judgment that can responsibly be made by the Commission/committee should not be made by the Parish Pastoral Council.

# LIST OF NORMS FOR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS Diocese of Cleveland

### **EXISTENCE**

1. Every parish of the Diocese of Cleveland is to have a Parish Pastoral Council.

### NATURE

2. The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body which makes recommendations to the Pastor.

### **AUTHORITY**

3. The Pastor is to preside over the Parish Pastoral Council.

4. The Pastor is to consult the Parish Pastoral Council on matters of major pastoral concern.

### **PURPOSE**

5. The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to promote the spiritual growth of the parish community and to plan ways for the parish to carry out the mission of the Church.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- 6. The members of the Parish Pastoral Council represent the interests and pastoral needs of the parish community.
- 7. Membership on the Parish Pastoral Council, except for those who are members by reason of their office, is to be determined in an appropriate manner which allows for the participation of the parish community.
- 8. Members of the Parish Pastoral Council, except for those who are members by reason of their office, shall have a limited term.

### ROLES

9. The Parish Pastoral Council is to select a Chairperson and other Officers from among its members.

### **STRUCTURES**

10. The Parish Pastoral Council works with existing parish groups and forms new groups as needed to promote the spiritual growth of the parish and foster the mission of the Church.

### CANON LAW, THE PASTOR, PASTORAL PLANNING, AND PARISH COUNCILS

One way to understand the nature of "pastoral," is to refer to Canons 528 and 529 of the Revised Code of Canon Law (1983). Here the Church presented the "pastoral responsibilities" of the parish priest. Pastoral Planning is one way in which all the baptized share in these responsibilities. The Parish Pastoral Council is "the most promising way to make sure such participation occurs" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "The Parish: A People, A Mission, A Structure," 1980). For convenience, the responsibilities are listed according to the threefold mission of Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King.

### Pastoral Responsibilities of the Parish Priest

SUMMARY

Canon 528

**PROPHET** (Teaching, Word)

1. Preaching The pastor is obliged to see to it that the word of God in

its entirety is announced to those living in the parish; for this reason he is to see to it that the lay Christian faithful are instructed in the truths of the faith, especially through the homily which is to be given on Sundays and holy days of

obligation and

2. Catechetics through the catechetical formation which he is to give;

3. Works promoting Gospel he is to foster works by which the spirit of the gospel,

including issues involving social justice, is promoted;

4. Catholic education he is to take special care for the Catholic education of

children and young adults;

5. Evangelization he is to make every effort with the aid of the Christian

faithful, to bring the gospel message also to those who have ceased practicing their religion or who do not profess the

true faith.

PRIEST (Sanctifying, Worship, Sacrament)

6. Eucharist at center The pastor is to see to it that the Most Holy Eucharist is

the center of the parish assembly of the faithful;

7. Nourish laity by devout celebration; especially frequent Eucharist and Penance

he is to work to see to it that the Christian faithful are nourished through a devout celebration of the sacraments and especially that they frequently approach the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist and the sacrament of Penance;

8. Develop prayer in family, participation in liturgy

he is likewise to endeavor that they are brought to the practice of family prayer as well as a knowing and active participation in the sacred liturgy,

9. Supervise liturgy under bishop, guard against abuse

which the pastor must supervise in his parish under the authority of the diocesan bishop, being vigilant lest any abuses creep in.

#### **SUMMARY**

#### Canon 529

### KING, SHEPHERD, SERVANT (Governing, Care, Enablement, Administration)

10. Visit faithful

In order to fulfill his office in earnest the pastor should strive to come to know the faithful who have been entrusted to his care; therefore he is to visit families, sharing the cares, worries, and especially the griefs of the faithful, strengthening them in the Lord, and correcting them prudently if they are wanting in certain areas;

11. Minister to sick, dying

with a generous love he is to help the sick, particularly those close to death, refreshing them solicitously with the sacraments and commending their souls to God;

12. Seek out poor, afflicted, lonely, exiled

he is to make a special effort to seek out the poor, the afflicted, the lonely, those exiled from their own land and similarly those weighed down with special difficulties;

13. Support, strengthen marriage and Christian family living

he is also to labor diligently so that spouses and parents are supported in fulfilling their proper duties, and he is to foster growth in the Christian life within the family. The pastor is to acknowledge and promote the proper role which the lay members of the Christian faithful have in the Church's mission by fostering their associations for religious purposes;

he is to cooperate with his own bishop and with the presbyterate of the diocese in working hard so that the faithful be concerned for parochial communion and that they realize that they are members both of the diocese and of the universal Church and participate in and support efforts to promote such communion.

- 14. Foster religious associations that develop the lay role in the Church's "mission"
- 15. Model and promote concern for parish, diocesan, and universal "communion"

#### Canon 536

After the diocesan bishop has listened to the presbyteral council and if he judges it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish; the pastor presides over it, and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office give their help in fostering pastoral activity. The pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by norms determined by the diocesan bishop.

### Canon 537

Each parish is to have a finance council which is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop; in this council the Christian faithful, selected according to the same norms, aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods with due regard for the prescriptions of Canon 532 (i.e., The pastor represents the parish in all juridic affairs in accord with the norm of law; he is to see to it that the goods of the parish are administered in accord with the norms of Canons 1281-1288).

#### SUMMARY

16. Pastoral Council

17. Finance Council

— Adapted from materials from the Archdiocese of Portland. Used with permission.

# OUTLINE OF LOCAL GUIDELINES FOR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS

Local guidelines can give direction and govern the operation of Parish Pastoral Councils. Each parish is asked to prepare guidelines for its Council. The guidelines are to be drawn up in accordance with the Diocesan Norms. The following information can be included in the local guidelines:

### 1. The Name of the Parish

The legal name of the parish is to be stated in the guidelines.

### 2. The Parish Mission Statement

A parish mission statement is the community's description of its purpose and reason for existence. Each parish, simply because it is a distinct community of the Christian Faithful, has its own sense or spirit of mission which needs to be articulated. The mission statement expresses the underlying principles and values for ministry in the parish and helps to set goals for future planning.

### 3. The Purpose and Functions of the Council

The purpose of a Parish Pastoral Council is to promote the spiritual growth of the parish community and to plan ways for the parish to carry out the mission of the Church. The focus of the guidelines will be on its nature as a consultative body which makes recommendations to the Pastor on major matters concerning the life and pastoral ministry of the parish. The local guidelines are to specify the ways the Council can fulfill its purpose through the four interdependent functions of spiritual formation, pastoral planning, pastoral policy development and communication.

### 4. Membership

Each parish needs to determine how the members of the Parish Pastoral Council can best represent the interests and pastoral needs of the parish community. The guidelines are to state explicitly how the membership is constituted, when, how and by whom. The term of office of each member is to be stated clearly and provision made for vacancies.

### 5. Officers

The guidelines are to designate the Officers of the Parish Pastoral Council, the manner of their selection, term of office and responsibilities.

# 6. Meetings

The guidelines are to specify the number of meetings each year and their regularity, as well as the principles governing open meetings and executive sessions. It should also note how special meetings may be called, the rules of procedure, and quorum requirements.

### 7. Commissions

The guidelines are to name any permanent Commissions and outline their responsibilities. It should also note which parish committees, and/or organizations assist each Commission.

### 8. Amendments to the Guidelines

The guidelines are to describe clearly the process for amending the guidelines.

# RESTRUCTURING AN EXISTING PARISH COUNCIL OR FORMING A NEW PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

### RESTRUCTURING AN EXISTING PARISH COUNCIL

The following process may be used in restructuring an existing Parish Pastoral Council.

The Parish Council members study **Christ Calls Us Together** and attend related inservice sessions. As a body, they pray and reflect on ways to begin to integrate the Norms into Council processes by November 25, 1991. Integration refers to all facets of Council life, including orientation, nomination, and selection of members and officers. The Council may need to modify some elements of its structure and methods of operation in order to bring the Council into accord with the Diocesan Norms. An *ad hoc* Committee may be formed to draw up local Parish Pastoral Council guidelines. After consultation with the parish community, and approval by the Pastor, these guidelines may be sent to the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office.

### FORMING A NEW PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The following process may be used in forming a new Parish Pastoral Council.

- 1. A Proposal to Form a Pastoral Council is announced publicly. All interested parishioners, including representatives from parish organizations and all Staff members, are invited to attend an initial Town Meeting. Some catechesis on the nature of the Church and its mission in the spirit of Vatican II is offered. The role of the baptized in sharing in the mission of Jesus is explained. Parishioners are invited to name their hopes and expectations for a Pastoral Council. Those who are interested are encouraged to attend several sessions of discussion and instruction on the nature, purpose, and specific functions of a Parish Pastoral Council.
- 2. **A Training Program** of four to eight sessions is offered for all who are able to attend. (The Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office has resources available for these sessions upon request.)

At the end of the Training Program, ten to fifteen persons from those who attended the sessions are discerned for the Steering Committee. Steering Committee members are to have the following traits:

- willingness to spend time praying and reflecting with others,
- time, enthusiasm, and interest for forming the Pastoral Council,
- concern for the interests and pastoral needs of the parish as a whole, rather than just representing the interests of a particular group in the parish,
- capability for working harmoniously with others,
- capability for delegating to others,
- patience to tolerate the slow process involved in formation of the Council,
- willingness to make a commitment to a twelve to 24-month process.
- 3. The Steering Committee, approved by the Pastor and including representatives of the entire parish (clergy, laity, and religious), is formed. At a Sunday liturgy, the names are announced and parishioners are asked to pray for the members of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee then begins a process of communal spiritual formation leading to the development of a Pastoral Council. The Steering Committee develops the Council by
- meeting regularly to pray and to build community together,
- reading, studying, and reflecting upon **Christ Calls Us Together** and the theology of shared responsibility,
- studying the parish situation to discern its needs,
- encountering and investigating the Pastoral Councils of other parishes,
- communicating with the parish at large about plans for the Council,
- discerning the best form of Council for the parish,
- writing up a description and guidelines for the Council according to Diocesan Norms,
- calling forth the Charter Members of the Parish Pastoral Council,
- assisting the new Parish Pastoral Council to plan the first meeting.
- 4. **Initial Guidelines for the Parish Pastoral Council** are developed and presented to the whole parish upon completion of the Steering Committee process and approval by the Pastor. These initial guidelines are sent to the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office.
- 5. Charter Members of the Parish Pastoral Council are called forth by the Steering Committee. These members may include a few Steering Committee members together with others gifted with the talents best suited for the work of the Council and who represent the interests and pastoral needs of the parish community. The new Parish Pastoral Council uses the initial guidelines for at least a year. The guidelines are evaluated and amended where needed on a regular basis.

# THE PASTORAL COUNCIL, THE PASTORAL STAFF/TEAM, AND THE FINANCE COUNCIL

The pastoral planning work of Parish Pastoral Councils is to focus on how the ministries and activities of the parish foster the spiritual development of the parish and enable its outward mission to the world. The following comparison also illustrates some distinct areas addressed by the Pastoral Staff/Team and the Finance Council.

Pastoral Council (Canon 536)	Pastoral Staff/Team	Finance Council (Canon 537)
<ul><li>Pastor presides</li><li>Ministerial leaders</li><li>Selected faithful</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Pastor</li> <li>Ministerial leaders</li> <li>Priests, Deacons</li> <li>Paid staff</li> <li>Volunteer staff</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Pastor (sole legal agent)</li> <li>Members with skills in finance, law, and administration</li> </ul>
CONSULTATIVE re:	COLLABORATIVE re:	CONSULTATIVE re:
What is needed in pastoral ministry	Pastoral Ministries of(Canons 528-529)	Administration of
so that all the baptized can grow spiritually and carry out the mission of the Church in the world	<ul> <li>Preaching</li> <li>Teaching</li> <li>Evangelizing</li> <li>Caring for the needy</li> <li>Working for justice</li> <li>Celebrating liturgy</li> <li>Enabling participation</li> </ul>	• parish goods
FUNCTIONS through	IMPLEMENTS	FUNCTIONS through
<ul> <li>Spiritual formation</li> </ul>	• in harmony with Pastor	• Financial planning
<ul> <li>Pastoral planning by Pastoral Council</li> </ul>	• in accord with goals set	Budget     preparation
<ul><li>Policy development</li><li>Communication</li></ul>	<ul> <li>within Finance Council's identification of resources available</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Monitoring legal issues</li> </ul>

### **Pastoral Council**

# FOCUS on...

- Evaluating how the parish enables members to live their faith at home, in the neighborhood and marketplace; asking how can we carry out Christ's mission in the world?
- Setting pastoral goals to carry forth mission and focus ministries
- Planning action steps to accomplish the goals
- Recommending pastoral policies and plans

# Pastoral Staff/Team

# FOCUS on...

- Supervision,
   collaboration,
   coordination
- Daily ministries, decisions, actions
- Managing and administering details of material, personnel, resources and scheduling

# **Finance Council**

### FOCUS on...

- Clarifying technical matters
- Offering expertise on prudent use of resources in conformity with civil law, diocesan policies, and canonical requirements (Canons 1280 - 1288)

—Adapted from materials from the Archdiocese of Portland. Used with permission.

# DISTINCTION BETWEEN POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

Parish Pastoral Councils develop and recommend policy. Pastoral Staffs deal with administration. Council Commissions may recommend policy to the Council in their area of expertise (using the principle of subsidiarity), but Commissions also implement policies of the Council and may do some administrative tasks delegated to them, particularly in small parishes. Some "rules of thumb":

# Policy-recommendation: Council/Commissions

### Issues that will impact the future

Ongoing issues Makes plans for long-range goals Formulated at Council meetings

### Pastor as policy-maker

Representative of the Bishop and Church policy Member of the Pastoral Council; develops policy together with Council; is responsible for final approval of Council recommendations.

### Administration: Staff/Committees

Issues that will arise next week; immediate demands
Issues that occur once only
Deals with regular programs
Takes place outside of meetings

### Pastor as administrator

Representative of the Bishop and chief administrator of the parish Delegates responsibility for administration to Staff, Commissions, Committees or individuals

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### THE PARTICIPATIVE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

RESEARCH & DATA GATHERING/NEEDS ASSESSMENT	DETERMINING SEVERAL ALTERNATIVES	RECOMMEND- ING A POLICY	IMPLEMEN- TATION	EVALU- ATION
(Council,	(Commissions &	(Pastoral	(Pastor, Staff	(Pastoral
Commissions &	Staffs with	Council)	& Committees)	Council,
Staff, with input	input from			Commissions
from parishioners)	Council)			& Staff)

<sup>—</sup>Adapted from **The Call Process**, Office for Parish Councils, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, p. 37. Used with permission.

# APPEAL PROCESS WHEN A COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION IS NOT APPROVED

When a Council continually seeks to build consensus in its deliberations, rarely would a Pastor not appprove a Council recommendation. Differences of opinion which may arise are resolved ideally at the local level when they occur. However, the following procedure is offered as an appeal process when major disagreements might exist:

- If the Pastor decides after prayer and reflection not to approve a Council recommendation or to withhold implementation, he expresses this decision to the Council and gives his reasons as fully as possible.
- If the Council has serious difficulty with accepting the Pastor's decision, the Chairperson may poll the Council as to whether they wish to accept the decision and drop the matter.
- If the Council wishes to pursue the matter, it is placed on the agenda for the next meeting. The Pastor and all concerned persons study the issue further and prepare any further relevant data or insights.
- At the next meeting, the Council prayerfully reviews the issue and the additional information provided. The recommendation may be revised in response to what is said. If the recommendation in question is passed again by two-thirds of the members present (providing there is a quorum) and is still not approved by the Pastor, the issue can be referred to the Regional Bishop. Either the Chairperson of the Council or the Pastor can initiate the referral.

# CONSULTATIVE BALLOT

Title of Proposal	
Number of Proposal	
Date	
Name	
Please check one:	
(strong yes)	Yes, I am in favor of this proposal as it stands.
(weak yes)	I am generally in favor of this proposal but would recommend that the Commission/person presenting this proposal consider the following point(s). I do not consider it necessary for the proposal to be brought back to the group after the above recommendations have been considered.
(neutral)	I am somewhat in favor of this proposal but I would like to see the following changes made before I give my support. I would like the proposal brought back to the total group after these changes have been made.
(weak no)	I am generally opposed to this proposal for the following reasons. If great urgency or expediency makes it impossible to draft another proposal for our next meeting, I will allow temporary implementation of this proposal with the understanding that a new proposal will be developed and presented as soon as possible.
(strong no)	No, I do not accept the proposal as it stands. The following are my reasons and/or my suggested alternative proposal(s).
Comments:	

### PERSPECTIVES ON CONSENSUS

- 1. One statement of consensus:
  - A group process of seeking substantial though not necessarily unanimous agreement on a significant matter. The group strives to attain a conclusion which all can support, even if some still disagree. Consensus can be described in the following way: "I understand what most of you would like to do. I personally would not do that, but I feel that you understand what my alternative would be. I have had sufficient opportunity to openly share my thoughts and feelings. I feel that I have been listened to, but I clearly have not been able to sway you to my point of view. Therefore, I will support what most of you wish to do."
- 2. In seeking consensus, the key value is to reach an optimal level of agreement and support. This contrasts with the concern to make a decision expediently, however divided people might be.
- 3. The concern to reach consensus has a profound impact upon how a group goes about its work. The desire for consensus leads to seeking participation by all members of the group and by others who will also be impacted by the outcome. Input is used to shape and reshape a proposal based upon what is said.
- 4. If we choose to build consensus, we first need to build relationships which will enable consensus to happen. Building an atmosphere of openness and truth is essential for a group seeking consensus. Otherwise people often end up with a false consensus. For example, if one asks, "Does everyone agree?" or "Does anyone disagree?" it may be that few people respond. However, there well may be people who do not feel comfortable expressing disagreement, especially if an atmosphere of honesty has not been created.
- 5. In order to understand each person's position on a proposal after it has been discussed, the Consultative Ballot (D 2) can be used. The Council Executive Committee or the group submitting the proposal carefully studies the ballots and develops a revised proposal for discussion at the next meeting.
- 6. One further test for consensus, aside from using the consultative ballot, is to ask each person to say the word 'yes' or 'no' to the proposal under study. If anyone says anything other than 'yes' they often mean some degree of 'no.' People who feel reluctant to openly disagree may implicitly express their reluctance by using words like 'yeah', 'sure', 'ok', 'um' and so forth.

- 7. If we cannot agree on the problem, it is very unlikely we will ever agree on a solution. Consensus-building happens in steps, i.e. seeking consensus on:
  - what is the purpose of each meeting or discussion
  - what is the problem or concern
  - what are some possible responses
  - what is the best response
- 8. In one form of the consensus process, each person is asked to:
  - Prepare his/her own position as well as possible before the meeting and realize that the task is incomplete until the viewpoints are supplied by the other members of the council. Each person has a part of the truth. To do this preparation, each member should have the agenda and proposal under study at least seven days before the meeting.
  - Recognize an obligation to express his/her own opinion and explain it <u>fully</u> so that the rest of the council will have the benefit of all the members thinking.
  - Recognize an obligation to listen to the opinion and feelings of all the other members and to be ready to modify his/her own position on the basis of logic, understanding and sensitivity.
  - Avoid conflict-reducing techniques such as voting, compromising, or giving in to keep the peace, and to realize that differences of opinion are both helpful and often present. In exploring differences the best course of action will gradually make itself apparent. Consensus begins only when members are ready to really listen and are open to modifying their positions.
- 9. Consensus almost always takes more time at the beginning than other methods. However, it can also be more 'efficient' than other methods when we consider a longer term perspective that includes effective implementation and positive community impact. Decisions that are made quickly but do not receive support in the implementation phase are seldom effective or efficient.
- 10. It is also important to be clear about 'who makes what decision in what ways.' This is an excellent area for dialogue at the very beginning of any significant consensus process. Otherwise the unspoken expectations about roles in the consensus process can lead to frustration and disappointment as different people or groups feel they were excluded or ignored. Some issues will require the consensus of a particular group. Other issues will warrant only informational updates on what is happening.
- 11. Consensus is often more time-consuming than simple voting. While voting allows for all members of the group to participate before a conclusion is reached, it is also competitive and tends to produce winners and losers. Furthermore, voting tends to become legalistic.

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- 12. Some guidelines for the successful use of the consensus method are:
  - The proper attitude for consensus requires a desire to arrive at a common conclusion and a willingness to compromise. This compromise is not yielding to an inferior solution, but recognizing the validity of another point of view.

    Members may disagree, but should avoid being argumentative.
  - Determining the areas of agreement and isolating the areas of disagreement will minimize the level of polarization in the group.
  - Dealing with the interests behind a declared position of disagreement will help to reach a general consensus.
  - The aim of consensus is to reach a common conclusion after the members have had a fair opportunity to express options and opinions.
  - The ability of the person to lead and unify the group is a dominant factor in achieving consensus.
- 13. Before they are enacted, recommendations of the Parish Pastoral Council need to be accepted by the Pastor. If the Pastor and Councilors deal with issues openly and honestly from the beginning of the consensus process, in a consistent environment of mutual respect, disagreements on issues will be minimized and an exceptional disagreement will not damage the relationship between Pastor and Council.

### SAMPLE OF A YEARLY COUNCIL CALENDAR

Although each parish will add its own activities, the following is one example of different elements in a Council's work throughout the year. Some points might be items on the Council's agenda, while others could be assigned for action between monthly meetings.

June Selection of Council Officers for the coming year; provide for one-on-one

orientation of new members; install Councilors at Mass; publicly express

appreciation to outgoing members.

**July** Arrange a Councilor's retreat day to get acquainted; identify general planning

areas and priorities for Council activity during the year in light of the past year's experience, the parish long-range plan and diocesan priorities; assign

responsibilities for Council meeting prayer and inservice for the year.

August Continue planning work by developing specifics for Council and Commission

followup; determine how communication will be done with parishioners.

**September** Communicate with the parish regarding plans for the year; obtain response

from the parish on proposed plans and other information; if beginning or revising a parish plan conduct a major listening process (visitation, telephone polling, open meetings, survey); a comprehensive planning effort completed

every 3-5 years could be the major Council agenda for 6-10 months.

**October** Incorporate parish response into a plan; committees revise plans accordingly

and begin programs.

**November** Plan for Advent and Christmas activities, perhaps a gathering for Councilors

and their families.

**December** Celebrate the season; continue planning followup activities.

January Review Council and Commission activities; make midyear adjustments and

general recommendations for plans; begin catechesis of parish community on

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call to participate in Council; appoint ad hoc Selection Committee to fill

Council vacancies for coming year.

February Continue planning process for the parish, Council and Commissions; arrange

for nomination of Candidates for Council.

March Consult with Finance Council with regard to parish budget process and

its relationship to plans; training sessions for Candidates.

April Discern new Councilors, make Commission assignments for the coming year;

review parish budget and committee recommendations for the coming

year's programs.

May Review and evaluate past year's accomplishments; include participation of

parishioners if possible; make annual report to the parish.

### SELECTION OF COUNCILORS

Due to the fact that the fiscal year begins on July 1 in the Diocese of Cleveland, the standard organizational year for Parish Pastoral Councils is July 1 - June 30. The following timeline is suggested for particular activities related to the selection of Councilors:

	January	Catechesis of parish community about the Baptismal call to share in
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mission of Christ in parish; appoint ad hoc Selection Committee

February Nomination of Candidates

February/March Training sessions for Candidates to Council

April Discernment of Councilors

May
 Orientation sessions for new Councilors

June
 Installation ceremony for new Councilors, appreciation expressed for

out-going Councilors

### **SELECTION COMMITTEE**

In January the Council Chairperson, in consultation with the Pastor and the other Councilors, appoints an ad hoc Selection Committee. This Committee plans, conducts and oversees the process for discerning Council members. The names of the members of the Selection Committee may be published in the parish bulletin. In the event that a member of the Selection Committee is nominated for the Council, that person should be replaced on the Committee. The ad hoc Selection Committee is responsible to:

- plan and implement the catechesis of the parishioners with regard to process of selecting Council members.
- hold a parish-wide nomination of Candidates in which each person may suggest one name with self-nomination encouraged.
- contact each person nominated to determine their willingness to serve.
- provide a training program for Candidates.
- ask for prayer support from the parish for Candidates.
- arrange for a process to discern new Councilors.
- announce names of new Councilors to Council members and the parish at large.
- plan and implement the installation of new Councilors.

### **NOMINATION PROCESS**

The process used to nominate candidates for membership to the Parish Pastoral Council is very important. Though the process may vary due to the size and make-up of the parish, certain principles should guide the nomination process:

- Membership to the Parish Pastoral Council should be representative of the pastoral needs and interests of the entire parish community.
- All nominees should be registered Catholic members of the parish in full communion with the Church.
- Other criteria for eligibility for Council membership are to be determined locally.
- Parishioners should be made aware of the criteria and encouraged to prayerfully consider those parishioners who meet these criteria.
- Nominees should participate in a training program which includes clarification of the Council's identity, roles and relationships.
- Care should be taken to avoid rapid and extensive Council turnover when considering the number of members selected each year.

Parish Pastoral Council nomination should be held in conjunction with the Liturgies of a particular weekend. Absentee ballots should be provided and counted. After the ballots have been counted, the Selection Committee contacts those who were nominated to the Council. At the end of the process a letter of appreciation may be sent to all who participated as nominees as well as to retiring Council members. The Council should be notified in writing of the selection results.

The final selection process should be determined by using one or more of the following processes:

- Formal discernment those nominated participate in a prayerful group process intended to call forth the Council members.
- Open elections by the parish community.
- Appointment of a limited number of Council members by the Pastor or Pastoral Council from among those nominated.
- —Adapted from **Parish Pastoral Council Guidelines**, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, copyright 1985, pp. 24-25.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL OFFICERS

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

The Chairperson will work closely with the Pastor to animate the Council and assist Councilors to actively collaborate for the mission of the Church. The Chairperson attends to the organizational aspects of the Council and chairs all meetings of the Council. The Chairperson needs to have an understanding of group process and have facilitating skills in order to fulfill this role with freedom and impartiality. The suggested duties may include:

- Provide significant time for prayer and reflection to situate each meeting in a climate of faith.
- Chair the Executive Committee Meetings.
- Chair all regular and special Parish Pastoral Council Meetings.
- Appoint other Chairpersons of Commissions/committees after consulting the Executive Committee.
- Motivate the various members/groups in the Council to fulfill their specific responsibilities.
- Monitor the time frame for each agenda item.
- Encourage all Councilors to participate actively and express ideas freely.
- Assist discussion by restating, summarizing, contrasting ideas and sentiments expressed by Councilors.
- Remind Councilors and guests of time limits and procedural rules.
- Clarify Council procedures.
- Make certain everyone has input into the consensus process.
- Identify and clarify the consensus reached by the Council.
- Set up processes for evaluation of Council effectiveness.
- Identify and clarify the topics that need to be placed on a future agenda and the reason for doing so.
- Schedule periodic Parish Assemblies. Since the Parish Pastoral Council should reflect the needs and desires of the total parish, and act in the best interest of all parishioners, opportunities for the Parish Pastoral Council members to meet with the parishioners should be made available. These meetings are to be designed to elicit the concerns and opinions of parishioners in general, or to be on specific issues, and/or to inform parishioners about Parish Pastoral Council goals and plans.
- Encourage and support communications between the Parish Pastoral Council and the parishioners. Meeting dates, agendas, Parish Pastoral Council minutes, and reports on the work of the Parish Pastoral Council Commissions and committees serve to keep open the channels between the Parish Pastoral Council and the parishioners, and should therefore be published and reported on a regular basis.

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### VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The Vice-Chairperson performs the duties of the Chairperson in the latter's absence and serves as an aide to the Chairperson in conducting the Council's work.

### **SECRETARY**

For the smooth functioning of the Council, it is recommended that a Secretary be appointed/selected. The suggested duties are to:

- Provide for a record of the minutes of the regular and special meetings. (Recording of minutes during the meeting may limit the Secretary's ability to participate in discussion. Therefore a person who is not a Council member may be requested to perform this service for the Council.)
- Maintain a roster of the members and records of attendance.
- Notify the Chairperson of those members missing three regular meetings in a twelve month period.
- Arrange for the necessary physical arrangement for the regular and special meetings and activities of the Council.
- Continually update Council documents.
- Distribute information and correspondence to Councilors as directed and to care for the necessary correspondence in the following manner:
  - receive and file all Council business correspondence.
  - make known all Council correspondence under the proper meeting procedure.
  - attend to such correspondence as is delegated to the Secretary by the Chairperson of the Council.
- Keep on file careful records of the Council's history, development, minutes, decisions, and names of leaders.

# **DESIGNING A STRUCTURE OF COMMISSIONS AND/OR COMMITTEES**

Many Parish Pastoral Councils will find it helpful to form Commissions or committees to assist in fulfilling their purpose and in carrying out their functions of spiritual formation, pastoral planning, policy development, and communication.

**Commissions** are small group structures organized within the Parish Council and are designed to help the Council develop pastoral goals and policies in specific areas of need or concern. The total structure of the Commissions needs to encompass all areas of the parish mission.

Committees are action groups which can be formed to collaborate with Staff in implementing programs or policies. Some committees will be somewhat permanent, as for example, a committee that provides hospitality for certain parish functions. Some committees will be temporary, organized for a specific purpose, as for example, working on details for the celebration of Confirmation.

There are different ways to organize Council Commissions, and each parish can determine the form that is adapted to their size and particular set of circumstances. It is well to avoid an extensive number of Commissions/committees. Too many subgroups can fragment the Council's ability to focus on the mission of the Church. Each Council needs to develop and maintain a ministerial balance in the structuring and functioning of its Commissions/committees.

Small parishes may not need the same number of Commissions/committees as large parishes. In some parishes, particularly small ones, the Council will function as a body at large in place of individual Commissions/committees. However, the Parish Pastoral Council assumes the responsibility for areas of its mission not addressed by Commissions.

When the Council decides to form a Commission it gives the Commission a clear sense of purpose and direction. The Council provides a concise description for each Commission, including a statement of purpose and job description for the Commission to set forth its area of concern and responsibility. The statements of purpose will clearly distinguish between various Commissions, to avoid confusion and duplication. Annually, each Council provides opportunities for members of a Commission to learn their roles and responsibilities.

The chief functions of each Commission are to:

- build a faith community among members of the Commission.
- identify the needs of the parish community in the Commission's area of responsibility, and to establish committees as needed.
- study the policies and priorities of the Diocese drawn from the "Our Vision and Goals" process.
- prioritize the needs and formulate long-range goals and objectives.

- discern with Council and Staff which needs can be addressed realistically in view of personnel, resources and time. Identify where inter-Commission collaboration might be effective.
- develop policies consistent with Catholic teaching and current Diocesan policies to implement the goals.
- recommend the proposed policies to the Pastoral Council for affirmation and support.
- communicate with the pastoral Staff/team about the implementation of the policies.
- designate times and criteria for the evaluation of progress in goal achievement and program effectiveness, the criteria being cooperatively developed with the pastoral Staff/ Team.
- maintain communication with the parish community concerning policies and programs
  while encouraging active support and involvement. The parish community also is to
  participate in the evaluation process.
- maintain communication with the respective diocesan offices and organizations for guidelines, policies, resources.
- provide ongoing education/formation of members in areas of concern through seminars, workshops and recommended readings.

Every Council periodically evaluates each of its Commissions/committees as well as their objectives and responsibilities in light of new circumstances in parish life and the Council's changing priorities. After a number of years, a Council's original Commission structure may prove to be somewhat antiquated or irrelevant. When this is the case, practical adjustments need to be made.

As Councils engage in pastoral planning, some Councils find it practical to establish one or more *ad hoc* committees in order to focus on a designated Council priority such as "researching the needs of young adults." The life span of the *ad hoc* committee ends when the goal or task given it by the Council is attained or abandoned.

A Handbook on Commissions and committees is planned for the future. In the interim, parishes may obtain help with individual Commissions or committees from the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office or other Diocesan Resources, as listed.

### DIOCESAN RESOURCES FOR COMMISSIONS

### **EDUCATION**

- Diocesan Education Office 696-6525, x 267
- Diocesan Religious Education Office 696-6525, x 328

### LITURGY

Diocesan Office for Pastoral Liturgy - 696-6525, x 363

### PARISH/FAMILY LIFE

- Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) 696-6525, x 393
- Marriage and Family Ministry Office 696-6525, x 356
- Office on Aging 696-6525, x 441
- Youth and Young Adult Office
  - Urban Region 641-6004
  - Southern Region 773-0426
  - Eastern Region 585-7736
  - Western Region 871-5297 (Cleve.) 933-2541 (Lorain)

### SOCIAL CONCERNS

- Catholic Information and Referral Services (C.I.R.S.) 696-HELP
- Social Concerns Secretariat 696-6525, x 231
- Diocesan Social Action Offices 696-6525, x 374
  - Commission on Catholic Community Action, Cuyahoga County 696-6525, x 306
  - Catholic Commission of Lake/Geauga Counties 585-7745
  - Catholic Action Commission of Lorain County 244-6037
  - Catholic Commission of Southern Region 773-0436
  - Wayne, Ashland and Medina Office 263-6176
- Parish Social Ministry 441-2125
- Pro-Life Office 696-6525, x 356
- St. Vincent de Paul Society 696-6525, x 315

### SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

- Parish Life and Spiritual Development Secretariat 696-6525, x 220
- Spiritual Development Office 696-6525, x 496
- Adult Religious Education Office 696-6525, x 308
- Evangelization Office 696-6525, x 453
- Office of Pastoral Liturgy 696-6525, x 363
- Parish Social Ministry Office 441-2125
- Social Action Office 696-6525, x 374

# FAMILY PERSPECTIVE FOR THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL AND COMMISSIONS

Family life today is at a crossroads. Family life is undergoing changes and is under tremendous societal pressures. Over the centuries the family has adjusted to many social changes. The family needs help to survive as a healthy entity into the next century. The Church is a strong advocate for family life.

Following the lead of Pope John Paul, the Bishops of the United States identified the basic elements of Family Perspective. What does the Family Perspective mean for a parish community? The following is a brief outline of concerns:

- 1. **The Vision of Family Life:** A concern for the sanctity of marriage, of family life, the role of the family in the parish, and the role of the family in developing moral values in society and the economy.
- 2. The Family as a Developing System: A concern for the stability of family life as the family goes through the various stages of change, and adapts to the growth of its members. It is a concern for helping young couples adjust to their new family life, and to help families deal with the changes in our society.
- 3. **Family Diversity:** A concern for the many varieties of family life that exist in parishes. There is a need to affirm the intact family of husband, wife and children. There is also a need to relate to the single-parent home, to homes with people living alone, and to homes with multi-generations living together.
- 4. Partnership between the Family and the Parish: A concern to find ways in which the family enriches the parish and the parish can enrich the family.

To address these concerns, in 1986 Bishop Pilla wrote a pastoral letter on the family called **Christian Family, the Church of the Home.** The letter called for a sensitivity to the Family Perspective in all diocesan and parish programs, services, and policies.

Parishes are encouraged to adopt the Family Perspective in planning for parish life and ministry. This means that all programs, policies, and services should be examined as to how they would impact on family life, including the single-parent home, or the home in which special needs exist. The Family Perspective is useful in planning educational programs, programs for sacramental preparation, and sports programs. It is essential to design these programs with a view as to how they will affect individuals and families who participate in them. All those who work within the parish: clergy, Staff, teachers, and volunteers, should be oriented to this perspective, in order to help in planning and implementing programs.

The Family Perspective does not call for new programs, new services, new structures, or any addition to the budget. It calls for a new perspective, a point of view or orientation to the design and implementation of parish services and ministries. It asks that these services be examined as to their impact on the family - **precisely as a family unit or system.** Most parish programs are directed to the needs of individuals; many fail to consider the impact of the family **precisely as a family unit.** The objective is to empower families to take charge of their homes, and to empower families to become more involved in the life of the parish.

These materials and other resources are available through the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office, 1027 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2503, telephone number 696-6525, x421 or 1-800-869-6525, x421.

#### **BOOKS**

- McKinney, Mary Benet, O.S.B., **Sharing Wisdom, A Process for Group Decision Making**, A Guide to Being and Building Church, Tabor Publishing, 1987.

  Contains a faith-filled approach to decision making. Valuable for Church groups seeking to discern and plan directions. Includes focus questions for each chapter, practical appendix materials and resource notes.
- Miller, Robert L. and Gerard Weber, **Touchstone**, **An Activity Book for Adult Learners**, Tabor Publishing, 1987.

  Contains activities that can be used as touchstones to help people make contact with their true feelings as well as ideas about themselves, God, Jesus and the Church. Council members may find these to be powerful instruments for building relationships, fostering self-awareness, and helping relate Scripture to their lives.
- Rademacher, William and Marliss Rogers, The New Practical Guide for Parish Councils, Twenty-Third Publications, 1988.

  Updated version, featuring new chapters on the meaning of consultation, the Council/committee system, as well as ways for Council members to grow in holiness. Includes discussion questions after each chapter, comprehensive bibliography, index, resources.
- Serendipity New Testament for Groups, Lyman Coleman, et. al., editors, Paulist Press.

  A new Testament with reflection questions in the margins. Excellent resource for prayer at Council and Commission meetings.
- Sofield, Loughlan, S.T. and Carroll Juliano, S.H.C.J., Collaborative Ministry, Skills and Guidelines, Ave Maria Press, 1987.

Focus is on the topics which groups need to address in order to grow in collaboration. Councils will find the chapters on spirituality, leadership, and conflict management especially helpful. Contains charts and discussion/reflection questions.

#### VIDEOTAPES

"The Dynamic Parish," IPSM, University of Notre Dame, 1989.

Thirty-minute videotape and support materials for parish leaders' reflection and renewal. Materials include a facilitator's guide, two articles for predistribution, discussion guide, suggestions for prayer, discussion questions, resources.

"Parish Pastoral Councils," ACTA Publications, Chicago, 1989.

Training program for new and existing Councils. Consists of two cassettes with a total of four one-hour sessions. Discussion Guide offers points to remember and questions for discussion.

### OTHER RESOURCES

Living the Spirit, A Parish Council Manual, Office of Stewardship and Lay Leadership, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, 1988. (Spanish version available.)

Contains the Archdiocesan Norms and discussion guide as well as numerous practical sections on the mission and ministry of Council. One of a number of helpful publications on Councils from Milwaukee. Others frequently used are The Call Process, I and II, and Parish Council Orientation/Nomination/Election Process, and Growth in Discipleship.

Church, A quarterly magazine for parish leaders, staff. The National Pastoral LifeCenter, 299 Elizabeth Street, New York, New York 10012.

**Today's Parish,** A monthly magazine which contains a regular article on Pastoral Councils, as well as other parish interest areas, e.g., liturgy, administration, planning. Suggest bulk subscription for Councilors.